643 of his great chiefs to cede it to him. The latter yields with good
[425] grace and usually receives some cattle in exchange.

643 The Mwami is an absolute monarch by divine right who
661 knows no other rule but his will, even his caprice. (2) In the past,
692

2. Hence the proverb: Luyose higirwa n'Unwami, "all depends on the King."

before our occupation, he could with impunity torture, mutilate, or kill anyone who had displeased him. His criminal sentences conformed to the customs of the country, which acknowledged this [87] formidable right, and no one thought of rebelling against his decisions (1).

[177] 1. The Mwami's right of life and death was abolished in 1917 at the time of the occupation of the country by our troops.

In the same way he is high judge and makes the final settlement in disputes, even the slightest, among his subjects.

Finally, the king is the supreme legislator of the people. With the help of the abiru, he sees that the common law is kept, but he has the sole power of modifying the country's law if and whatever he wishes.

643 He announces his decisions (amategeko) at the door of his rugo,
[692] where people from all parts have congregated to pay homage or demand justice. The intumwa (messengers) are then charged to make known the Mwami's orders to the people of the different provinces.

643 In addition to his Mututsi name (Musinga, Rudahigwa, etc.),
551 the Mwami receives on his accession a king's name (Yuhi, Mutara, etc.). These names are repeated periodically; thus the present Mwami is Mutara III.

The king is sometimes given a surname such as Rwabugiri Sezisoni (Merciful, Clement) (2).

[192] 2. Foreign word originating in Buhima, east of Ruanda.

766 that the burial ground is a place called Wunjange close to Imanga Mountain (see p. 185 [not translated]).

171 Emin Pascha reports of the Bahima (Wahuma) of Unjoro that in this region the corpse of the ruler is also smoked on a catafalque and preserved in his hut for many years until his successor finally buries him (Petermanns Mitteilungen, 1879, p. 392).

768 In Urundi the homestead of the dead king is abandoned as are those of deceased batwale; it gradually disintegrates and only the trees that formerly formed the fence reveal to the traveler the former importance of the site. A guard inside a 775 hut placed next to it [116] sees that nobody enters the place 769 and that the spirit of the deceased king, which, as has already been mentioned, is usually pictured as a big snake living on the site (totemism, p. 102), regularly receives sacrificial offerings of food and drink (No. 19, p. 205).

Van der Burgt reports that in honor of the dead king "heca- 766 tombs of human victims" are sacrificed (No. 19, p. 204), and ● 661 that some batwale and influential Barundi are executed" in order to appease the manes of the king." This presumably refers mainly to those unfortunate people who immediately after the king's death fall as victims of the policy of his successor or of the pretender to the throne, as well as the alleged sorcerers and witches who caused the king's death -- for natural death is [761] something the Barundi do not know -- and who are now hunted down by the medicine men and executed (see p. 132, 140). In former times a few young girls and important men of the country were killed at the king's funeral in order to "accompany the deceased to the beyond" (see p. 186 [not translated]).

791 The umufumu also tries to predict the future and to re-
787 veal unknown facts and events, i.e., to prophecy. This is done with a great display of simple-minded hocus-pocus. Many small objects are poured on the ground from various calabashes. From their accidental arrangement a situation is explained and its future development prophesied. The Barundi believe that the predictions of the abafumu are in most cases correct. This may not be too difficult if the magician is an intelligent man.

791 [134] The umufumu, the medicine man, must under no circumstance be confused with the monster who practices
754 witchcraft, the umurosi. The difference between the two may be characterized in the following manner. According to Barundi belief the abafumu are the benevolent, helpful medicine men who can free a person from the malediction of the evil sorcerer, the umurosi. The abafumu are the official, protectors against sorcery, but the abarosi are the evil sorcerers who occasionally put a spell on people. In Ruanda and in the southernmost Bahima state, Ufipa, the same names are used for the good sorcerers (mufumu) and for the evil ones (murosi or mulosi) (No. 47, pp. 179, 183-186; No. 48, p. 319). In reality the umufumu, who is usually an adroit and intelligent person, builds his position on gullibility and fraud. The perse-
[578] cuted umurosi is usually an innocent person who has either incurred the suspicion of his fellow citizens because of his eccentricity, or more frequently his good fortune and prosperity have excited other people's envy. However, the greatest and most
791 famous abafumu are almost without exception astute criminals
661 who will not shrink from any atrocity. The main reason for
628 their evil influence and great power is the fact that they are always in league with the chiefs, and through their activity as medical practitioners and counselors they are thoroughly informed about all family matters. The entire nation suffers under the terrorism of the great medicine men who are allied with the chiefs. Nobody dares avenge these atrocities on the evildoers themselves, for if one of them were killed or executed

as the result of a denunciation before the German Resident, the entire kin group of the chief or the umufumu would be bound by law of the vendetta, and they would take terrible vengeance on the family of the "traitor" (No. 45, 1913, pp. 83-84).

Neither the umufumu nor the umubandwa is invited to officiate at the real cult acts of the Barundi people, at "divine services." These are a matter for the priest, the kiranga. Although among the Barundi one's entire life is simply a series of performances to fulfill religious requirements which affect all matters of existence, they nevertheless assign particularly great importance to two rituals. For this reason the kiranga has to officiate at them. One is the ceremony of the "sacred spear," the other is the act of erecting the small huts for ancestors and spirits, ivigabiro, akararo, ivitabo (No. 19, pp. 498-499).

The ceremony of the sacred spear is enacted at all the important events in the life of the Murundi, whenever protection against evil spirits is especially desirable. The father of the family is host at the ceremony and pays the officiating kiranga; relatives, friends, and neighbors act as assistants. The ritual takes place, for example, at the birth of a child, particularly at the birth of twins, if there is a serious sickness in the family, at weddings, joyous celebrations, funerals, etc. (No. 19, p. 516). Thus, it is a ceremony which may be sponsored by any Murundi who is in a position to afford the expense. This is not the cult gathering of the ababandwa, described on p. 124 above, which also takes place under the direction of the kiranga and is of a similar nature, but it is only performed by the secret society of the ababandwa.

Even the ordinary spear of the Murundi is considered sacred in a certain sense since it is the symbol of paternal power and the authority of the ancestors. Consequently the "sacred spear" guarded by the priest is the object of great devotion. In the point of this spear lives the spirit Kiranga, [135] or Indagarra, or Riangombe, depending on whether the spear has been dedicated to one or the other of the spirits. In most cases it is Kiranga. The shape of the spear is like that of any other, but one half of its blade is unpolished and black. If someone

643 796 between the various elements of the people; it was supposed to be a large contribution to the land's fertility and the country's welfare, and in all this the part played by the king was prominent.

643 631 Only in fact was the king's power limited. He transferred the leadership of parts of his sultanates to some chiefs, almost in every case relatives (brothers, uncles, cousins), members of the royal family (*bagánwa*). In their turn these would establish subchiefs chosen among their relatives, or the aristocracy (*bafáseni*), or even Batutsi commoners, but seldom among the Bahutu. The division reached very far and the last elements of it were not only single hills, but even parts of a hill. And although the ensuing intrication and divided hierarchy remind us forcibly of our own feudo-vassalic middle ages, and appear consequently most unstable, the Barundi system, if we set aside some violent revolutions, possessed some sort of stability and could carry on thanks to its practically hereditary organization. Chiefs, subchiefs and all who had availed themselves of the deep-seated division of authority were naturally possessed of rights over the common people and were entitled to demand from them various privileges, usually defined by local custom, and which ranged from a present of beer to well-determined contributions or vaguer corvées (services).

423 661 Some scholars have maintained that the *mwami* definitely had a right of possession over the land of the whole of his sultanate. But the truth is that land was not an object of property for the *mwami* or for commoners and the *mwami* and his representatives simply had to allow its utilization and choose the people to carry it out. Such designations were, just as the political leaderships, more or less unstable, more or less precarious; there exists a heredity in fact; but it is possible for a chief, should he care to do so, to eject the tenants. Besides, the abandoned or untilled lands are at his disposal. The system in general enables members of the leading classes as well as members of the subject classes to constitute estates with the only difference that the former will possess large herds of cattle and have their lands tilled by people liable to unpaid service while the latter have only very few cows and must depend on their own labour and that of their families.

The political leader's say in agricultural matters also solves the difficult problem of proportioning field and pasture-lands. The chief will not allow the latter to be reduced, and the threat to the cattle-breeder is further avoided by the chief's right to use the sorghum fields for pastures after the harvest (*ibishaka-shaka*) either for themselves or for others.

423 The territory of an important chief, with its intermixing complex of herds, estates, revenues, and services, very often extended over large, sometimes

[p.14 (B)]

423 dispersed areas. The chief would have his *ingo* (plural of *rugo*, residence) built on several hills, and usually establish one of his wives in each of them, to direct the centre entrusted to her. This is a very typical estate organization : it is based on polygamy.

The position towards cattle-owners

422 We have said that the *mwami* did not possess the
661 land : neither has he any right of possession over the big cattle. The *mwami* would sometimes take cattle where he found them, but this was only a violent misuse of his tyrannical power. Batutsi and even Bahutu cattle-rearers are definitely the owners of their herds when, of course, the cattle are not simply entrusted to them.

231 These cattle can be given and this very thing adds
431 a great deal to their worth, for those who desire them
357 are naturally attracted towards those who own them. The king presents with cows the great who come to pay him homage. During the great annual sorghum festival, he ritually distributes cattle to some methodically chosen persons. The great men used to be surrounded, and are still, with a group of servants of various ranks : *ntore* (vassals who owed them a more important military aid than the average tenants), *bagendanyi* (young attendants charged to carry out their messages), *bakamyi* (young Batutsi entrusted with the milking of the cows), *abungere* who watch over the cattle), *bakevvi* (cooks), *inshoreke* (female attendants and servants). The most esteemed among these followers (*ntore*, *bagendanyi*, *bakamyi*) hope to receive cows one day, the *bakamyi* especially, on the day when they will leave the service to get married.

231 There are also the so-called cattle-contracts. Here
675 are the most interesting of them : (1) A cattle-owner
425 gives someone a cow, in exchange, the donee will later
554 return a calf after the cow has calved two or three times. (2) An important owner gives several cows to a man who must in his turn permanently provide him with a milch-cow. (3) The owner of an important herd entrusts a man with the breeding of several cows which he may use for milk and manure ; one of the cows will be his if the herd has prospered.

In all these cases, the recipient becomes the liege of the donor (or the depositor). In some cases, the recipient is considered a near relative, even a son of the donor and marriage impediments ensue from the assimilation. On the other hand, the higher the donor is socially speaking, the less he tries to derive material profit from these transactions : his real profit is in the power he acquires over the person of the recipient.

423 *The relations between agriculturists*

425 Similar ties may exist between agriculturists. The

644 with flagrant disgraces and the official executions that sometimes
662 resulted from them.

People became madly infatuated with everything abnormal or enigmatic, with the predictions of sorcerers, with ghosts, crimes, sudden or mysterious death.

And since the regular court attendants had a thorough knowledge of their neighbors' genealogy, past, history, acquaintances, and interests, it is easy to guess that the daily chronicle also concerned private quarrels, bereavements, marriages, and births. This was the usual pabulum of conversation. Similar in this respect to a certain French king who associated largely with lowly people, fortunetellers, astrologists, apothecaries, wig makers, and even the executioner, the Hamitic monarch also liked to surround himself with master cooks, archiaters, healers, magicians, and charlatans of all sorts to whom he occasionally distributed honors and appointments (1).

1. Some striking examples of those royal favors are known. Some subjects in most humble circumstances managed to obtain the hand of a Hamitic princess and to be raised to noble rank.

643 One can easily imagine what the royal administration was like
●661 under the circumstances. No desire to encourage the arts, to favor agriculture, to improve the people's condition. The rights of the people exist theoretically, but they are regulated by no organic text and are too often dependent on the whims of royal and local power.

Infatuated with their own glory and exclusively preoccupied with their own pleasure, the sovereigns had no ambition other than to raise their prestige and to enjoy life.

The kings did not resemble one another from one reign to the next.

A warrior would succeed a peaceful man. Some, cruel and brutal, had the bloody whims and disordered passions of despots and degenerates. Others, of /42/ simpler tastes, led a peaceful existence and allowed the people to breathe.

643 One hears of sovereigns who liked and practiced the "things
661 of the mind," such as Yuhi-Mazimpaka, whose literary output is still highly prized by Black intellectuals.

644 The king's wives and concubines lived away from the court. "Either he had noticed their beauty himself..., or their charms had been brought to his attention by the great who were sure to please him in so doing."

Among the reasons for the profusion of wives in the sovereign's harem, "the yearnings of the heart and the demands of the senses both played their part" above all else. Many a prince surrendered without restraint to voluptuous activities. Yet one hears of some romances adorned with the charms of literature which may actually have taken place.

842 It must be admitted in all fairness that a powerful idea presided over the establishment of the family among the Hamites. Like the Hebrews and so many other ancient peoples, the Batutsi regarded large numbers of children, and especially sons, as an honor, a glory, and a source of strength. They considered themselves fortunate if they could watch the growth of their children and their children's children to the third and fourth generations.

595 A large progeny seemed to them a sure guarantee for the future
578 of their race. Let us add that peace could not reign in their homes. For among the legitimate wives, there was almost invariably a favorite. "Competing among themselves, competing for their children, they drove the latter to rivalry, and the husband, following his preferences or giving way to his weakness, did not always share equitably his heart, his favors, and his goods." (1) /43/

1. The loved wife is called nkundwakazi, the hated wife mbikazi. A rival is called mukeba or umugore w'ishyari, that is to say, literally, "jealously woman /or wife/."

428 Only boys share in the real estate (1).

> 1. As exceptions to this rule, one finds a few joint patrimonial domains which the co-heirs exploit together under the frerage (or frareshe). This kind of landed property is called isage (or ingaligazi).

The oldest son, or at least the one appointed by the dying man to succeed him, receives a share slightly larger than that of his brothers, owing to his right of primogeniture. If there are three heirs, the property is divided into three lots of equal size except for one field or one small banana grove.

This /latter/ parcel is called umusaya and is added to the share of the first heir.

Cattle and sheep are divided equally among them.

311 423 One does not find any free or abandoned land in Ruanda. There may be more or less extensive areas that lie fallow because they are not very fertile, or because the presence of wild beasts makes them too dangerous, or because they are too remote from inhabited centers or too extensive in relation to the population size, but they are not on this account res nullius /Tr.: nobody's property/. Their owners always retain the right to use them and take effective possession of them whenever they wish.

Forests, mountains, moors, marshes, and bogs are divided into a multitude of lots whose owners are publicly known.

[661] Through an abuse of authority, the chiefs may temporarily reserve for themselves part of the plateaus, valleys, or marshy lowlands to graze their cattle.

In spite of this, their subjects retain proprietary ownership of these lands and grasslands and they will not fail to assert their rights at the first opportunity, for example, when a chief departs or when he is replaced.

In some regions it frequently happens that the arable plots no longer meet the /48/ needs of the population. Then those men who

644 634 64 3. The petty independent chiefs (Abanyabikiugi), who owe allegiance only to the king but who rule a small area in the province of a great chief. It is rare for a provincial chief not to have in his territory one or several enclaves of this sort, whose rulers are appointed directly by the king. The latter does this to save a poor relative from misery or to reward a favorite. Whenever the opportunity arises, the lucky beneficiary will watch the actions of his colleague, the provincial governor, and denounce him to the king in order to gain the latter's approval.

644 778 [534] 4. The appointed keepers of the famous palladium drum called Kalinga, over which a vigil is maintained day and night by a special team chosen from the Abiru clan.

This drum has a long history, and the vicissitudes it entailed have given rise to many a narrative. The most important of these bears on the miraculous preservation of the drum and its unexpected discovery at the beginning of Ruganzu II's reign. It is believed that the drum was burned in 1896 at the time of the Runchunchu affair. Kabale, the instigator of the rebellion and an uncle of the new king, had a new one made identical with the first.

It is the great sacred drum, the badge of sovereignty and palladium of the realm. It is not habitually played. As a rule, it [402] must follow the king on /372/ his journeys. It is carried in a hammock, and the other drums are played in its honor. It is entitled to the same respect as the king, and people clap their hands three times when they pass before it. In order to preserve it, one rubs it from time to time with butter and the blood of beeves whose entrails "turned white," that is to say, whose sacrifice was established as favorable by the sacrificer-diviners.

[727] The bloody spoils (ibikondo) of important enemies are fastened to the leather strips stretched over the sides of the instrument.

Most of those dismal trophies vanished in the Runchunchu fire, but the inhabitants of the capital cite with pride the names of the unhappy princes whose defeat and death are still inscribed in macabre fashion on the palladium-drum (1).

686 "Why don't you make the sky weep if you wish to find a remedy for your suffering!" people would shout at them as a joke (1).

1. Izuba libaririre!

"If it does not rain at such-and-such a time, if you do not make our fields green again, you will die".... And execution followed close upon the threat.

635 692 Like the king, the great Batutsi chiefs sat in judgment and passed sentence in their provinces when they resided there or whenever they were passing through. They were not all alike. Among them there were just and humane men, and one likes to believe that they were in the majority. Some nevertheless left a bad reputation 681 on account of their cruelty. It is said that two of them took pleasure in having the arms of their victims bound behind their backs with wire drawn so tightly that the elbows met and the wire sank into the flesh.... Many persons died of this unique and atrocious torment. Another dignitary had those upon whom he wanted to wreak his revenge immobilized and made to lie on their backs.

Then he would make his victim drink a pitcher of beer or water through a gourd shaped like a funnel. A third man, leaning heavily on his spear, would pierce his victim's foot and thus nail him to the ground. A high dignitary punished those who had displeased him by seizing two of their fingers and pulling them apart with all his might, thus tearing the tissues that connected them. Fortunately, however, those were exceptions which should be ascribed to paganism, the primitiveness of customs, the cruelty of the times, the criminal procedures then in effect, the passions aroused by clan struggles, the competition for power, the revolutions, and sometimes also the proud and savage conceit of chiefs who were too young to govern. /380/

643 661 In order to gain an accurate understanding of the more that prevailed at the time, the reader must be reminded that the life of a man counted for very little in the eyes of the king and of the great chiefs. Subjects of Lwabugiri who are still alive today (he died in 1895) report that in order to show his skill or to judge the strength of his bow, the sovereign would shoot at the first person who appeared

643 along the road, to the sanctimonious applause of his entourage. Once
661 he even tried his spear against one of his chief lieutenants. The latter had the audacity to evade the blow, pick up the weapon, and hurl it back at him with equal skill. The king managed to duck and showed no displeasure, at least on that day. He even congratulated the man for his boldness and courage and said that he was a "man" (umugabo).

This scene was enacted more than once during the same reign. The unfortunate men who served as targets to the spirited monarch, however, lacked sufficient audacity, and especially good fortune, to get away... with such amiable words.

Under the reign of the present monarch, Yuhi IV Musinga, [687] from the time of his accession to the throne and prior to European penetration, the famous Ndamutsa drum often heralded one or several executions. Aside from the crime of sorcery it was enough to be denounced, rightly or wrongly, as having spoken poorly of the king and queen mother. Such crimes were punished on short order and briskly.

Public rumor has it that the young king tried his first gun shot on a madman. He hit him point blank.

The courtiers who were present at this murder scene emitted frenzied bravos to applaud the supreme skill of His Majesty.

[177] European influence and supervision alone managed to bring to an end this state of affairs and this kind of behavior, which in the natives' way of thought only served to accentuate the majesty and power of the king. /381/ It does not follow that this change made the pagan Blacks any happier, for they were awed by the ancient customs and the bloody displays of brute force.

671 In principle, justice was the king's justice, since as the saying goes, "the king is the law." For the sake of truthfulness, however, it must be added that there is a set of laws in existence. It is certainly not a complete code, but it nevertheless includes a series of laws and practices adding up to a veritable common law which, had it been rigorously applied, would have avoided many an extortion and cruelty. Gradually, over the centuries, a special procedure had been established for litigations bearing on property rights, inheritance rights, matrimonial rights and bride price, physical damage such as

644 violent death when they least expected it. This was for a long time
[682] a sword of Damocles which almost invariably fell upon the head of those who had the misfortune of being selected for that unenvied position.

We shall cite, later on, a few examples of this.

644 B. The cupbearers (abanyanzoga), like their colleagues in
273 the royal dairy and kitchen, also practiced a dangerous trade. Their
651 duties involved the obtention of the best beer available, which they had to preserve and to offer at the moment it was desired. They were numerous, and some of them lived near the king while others roamed the land to requisition honey, beer itself, or the bunches of bananas which are used in the manufacture of this precious beverage (1).

1. The head of the cupbearers, a certain Mutagikwa, is regarded thereby as captain of the Indengabaganizi army corps. This is a strictly honorific title, which nevertheless enables him to levy taxes in those territories where he exercises his functions as an officer of the "Cup."
He lives at Nyarugenge in Gassagara, the Buhanga.

Originally, employees in this category theoretically had rights
[661] only to bunches of bananas and honey (imitsama), and they roamed the land to obtain them (gutorana). Gradually they took on the habit of behaving like true chiefs and of demanding from the inhabitants contributions in kind, beans, sorghum, cows, etc., as well as forced labor, called buletwa. This permitted them not only to live well, but also to acquire large herds.

644 C. There are several work groups assigned to the cultivation
276 and preparation of the tobacco which is used by the prince. The plants destined for his use come from the Bugoyi /386/ Mata in the Marangara, and Ruyanza and Mussambiro in the Nduga, among other

644 Others were entrusted with the manufacture of baskets, hampers, mats, and other fine basketry.

Sebugrigri (deceased in 1925), the representative of the great chief Rwidegembya in the Bigogo province, had to supply annually two or three of those children, who were euphemistically known by the name of "pages" (intore) or "outgoers" (emigrants) chosen by fate (inkuke).

644 661 Nyiramurici (deceased in 1927), a Muhunde /Hunde/ from the Gishari and a close relative of the queen of that land, came to pay homage to the Hamitic prince of Ruanda. As a reward for his services as a sorcerer, he was given three villages (Gassovu, Gatoke, and Nyaruchundura) located in the Kanage, with the sole obligation of handing to the queen mother /459/ any girls he might father or obtain among his subjects (1).

[65]

1. This obligation has always been regarded as a hateful one. As a rule parents were loath to surrender their offspring and complied only under duress. Sometimes they managed to elude this exorbitant tax by giving the chief one or even several cows. The chief also took advantage of this power to tax only his enemies or to extort several head of cattle from them under this revolting pretext.

In order to gain the good graces of the king or his mother, certain families freely gave up their children, boys or girls. The lot of the adolescent boys was much preferable to that of their sisters. Once grown up, after serving for a time in the page corps, they regained their freedom and were often granted the rule of a hill as a reward for their sojourn at court.

178 The Blacks insist that the custom was not followed when the
643 present king ascended the throne in 1896. The bloody events which
782 took place at that time caused it to be overlooked.

It is not certain either that the Bakunzi, or people from Bukunzi, lent themselves to this custom willingly, considering its odiousness and the independence they were beginning to show in their dealings with the Hamitic king.

Privileges and Favors at Court

In the course of this work, there has been frequent mention of
661 exemptions, franchises, and immunities granted to individuals or
644 families. The reader is advised to look into Fondation du Royaume hamite /Founding of the Hamitic Kingdom/ and Histoire du Règne de Ruganzu II (History of the Reign of Ruganzu II) /Books II and III, not translated/, in order to familiarize himself with the subject.

He will find there the approximate time when those rights were granted and the reasons for their existence, and he will be surprised to encounter instances of regional autonomy.

We shall speak here only of certain favors or /466/ privileges of a special character, granted for a specific period of time or even permanently.

Elevation to noble rank falls into the second of these categories.

1. Elevation to Noble Rank

563 The Batwa, as we said earlier, are a caste despised by the
644 Bahutu as well as by the Batutsi.
554 It is regarded as a dishonor not only to contract matrimonial
565 unions with them, but also in making them commensal. There have been exceptions to this type of ostracism, however. In reviewing the past, one finds some Batwa who were raised to noble rank and placed on the same level as the Batutsi.

Others gained practical nobility in the course of time.

The best-known example is that of the Mutwa /singular of Batwa/ Busiete, to whom Yuhi III Gahindiro gave his own daughter Mulangamirwa in marriage as a reward for his devotion and services.

2. Other Favors and Privileges

661 644 a. "The gift of the fire cow" (inka y' umuriro). This is when the king sends a cow to a chief who has been stripped of his property or who has been in disgrace for some time. It is tantamount to a reconciliation.

This privilege grants the man who had been ostracized or banished permission to settle definitively on granted land and to build there like anyone else.

The gift of the cow, which is a sign and proof of forgiveness, also heralds further favors.

The last two beneficiaries of royal clemency were Musinga's maternal uncles, Lukangamiheto and Luhinankiko, whose ambition and political activities had /469/ greatly displeased the queen mother and the regent Kabale, creator of the bloody Ruchunchu revolution. They regained their rank and position at court.

661 b. Entrance rights (ilembo). This favor is highly valued by those to whom it is granted. It consists of receiving, in lieu of the king, the gifts of material goods and herds which are daily offered to the prince. Hence the expression, "to proceed to or place oneself at the entrance to the Court" (kuja kw' ilembo ry'ibgami) so as to take over the gifts and cows which subjects bring to their sovereign. This is a temporary privilege that is granted only for a few days and never more than two or three months to the same individual.

[651] c. Ubulenga nzira is a sort of tithing right which the king and great chiefs grant to individuals whom they wish to reward. The holder of this right may levy a tax on the inhabitants of the territory over which the chief or king has jurisdiction. He gets cows and produce as long as the concession is not revoked.

[651 721] d. The right to levy a cow wherever one spends the night (kurar'inka) is largely granted in times of war, on the way out and on the way back.

[702] It is a good device to recruit soldiers, who greatly valued this privilege and made use of it both in friendly and in enemy territory.

e. Ubutumwa ("message"). The "right of message" grants the king's envoys the right to demand a cow from the recipient of the message. Instances are cited of men who managed to assemble fine herds thanks to their job as royal couriers.

661 f. "Those who are not looted" (abatanyagwa). This is a kind of privilege of inviolability granted by the prince to chiefs whom he takes under his special protection. He /470/ promises to help them and swears never to surrender them to their enemies.

g. "The right to secure provisions at night" (oguhaha n' ijoro) is a polite metaphor, or rather a gracious euphemism, that means that the beneficiaries of this privilege are entitled to steal freely during the night. It is said that this strange privilege was granted for the last time to the clan of the Bakoma, descendants of the petty king of Marangara, who took advantage of it to the best of their interests.

Favors of this kind were not surprising to the Blacks, who knew only too well that the goods of the subjects belonged to the king, and that by taking them (directly or through an intermediary) he was only taking what belonged to him.

Chapter 5

644 Safeguard with which the King Surrounds Himself on the Part of His Employees. Dangers to Which the Latter Were Exposed Daily. Customs and Formalities Observed by the King and His Subjects.

I. Precautions Employed by the King to Insure the Fidelity of His Servants and Employees

Not only does the king demand the most absolute devotion, but he also requires the most rigorous secrecy from most of his people. Those who must be especially careful not to risk his anger and suspicion are the cooks, table servants (abõzi, abahanga), cup bearers, the men who prepare tobacco, and those in charge of the prince's pipe (abanyaruhago).

The sacrificer-diviners and especially those who are known by the name of Abakongori or Abanyambuto because they use the

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645 We have seen that in order to preserve the supernatural properties of the beverage (igihango) the candidates were forbidden to smoke, drink, or spit. What were they to do in order to avoid the disastrous effects that the test poison, according to popular belief, might have upon their health?

Accustomed as primitives are to the strangest and most incredible things, the Banyarwanda believed that in order to avert any danger in this connection, all they had to do was to commit a shameful act immediately.

As a result of this belief and in the thought that they were being helpful to the neophytes, their relatives led them away, outside the clan, along with some friends. They lay in wait and seized [839] a young man or a young girl, depending on the sex of the candidate, and did violence to the young person.

It must be added that the Blacks, knowing the distaste of [178] Europeans for such sport, have not dared to fulfill the last part of the program since the arrival of the Whites.

II. Dangers to Which Dignitaries, Employees, and Favorites at Court Were Exposed at All Times

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●661 It may be said that until recent years the secret of certain customs and traditions had been well preserved, for fear of the effects of the test poison and for fear of the king, who would not hesitate to punish delinquents at the first sign of indiscretion. It is equally true that until our time the majority of servants /473/ and underlings lived under the risk and perpetual threat of a violent death which might claim them at any moment. The monarch, who did not rely exclusively on the effectiveness of the test poison and probably had very good reasons not to do so, unfortunately made use quite often of his prerogatives as sovereign and his discretionary power over all things to apply extravagant punishments. Nothing counted in his eyes except his own interests, his whims and his passions. He frequently gave free rein to the latter. A mere suspicion or even less was sufficient to cause the merciless death of an unfortunate individual.

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661 Some examples will clarify the preceding statements. We may add that they were the last in this bloody serial, and that such things could not happen at the present time.

The most vulnerable servants were unquestionably those who were assigned to the king's kitchens or to the service of his meals, as well as those who were in charge of watching over his beer and milk and those who prepared his tobacco. So as not to extend the necrological list out of all proportion, since the other employees were far from being safe, we shall speak here only of victims belonging to the above-mentioned categories of servants.

Kiryana (from the word kurya, "to eat"), or the "House that devours" its inhabitants, such is the portentous name given to the hut where the bowls of milk reserved for the prince are kept.

Two or three keepers are assigned to this duty, which consists of cleaning the bowls, receiving the milk brought by the chiefs, and presenting it to the king once a day.

Of all vocations this is the most feared and the least envied. Numerous have been its victims, and numerous also those who ran far away to neighboring lands in order to avoid this dangerous honor.

This is why it was always assigned by force. It may be said that /474/ few of those men left their duties without having paid with their lives. The sovereigns, who also lived under a perpetual fear of poisoning and bewitchment and who were not in the least miserly about the blood of their subjects since it counted for so little in their eyes, did not hesitate to nurture a salutary fear in their entourage by striking blindly into the ranks of their servants. Those who fell served as examples to those who remained. It was a matter of inspiring terror and instigation their zeal. Thanks to his high intelligence and to his diviners and sorcerers, the king was believed to know everything which might be plotted in secret against him.

Some Concrete Instances

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696 A young man had been attached to this particular service /milk hut/ for about 15 years. Many a time his sovereign had assured him that he was satisfied with his services and that nothing would ever happen to him.

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His assistants and colleagues kept vanishing, almost invariably struck by the bloody fate which clung to them and to their position. He alone remained untouched. To bind him closer the king plied him with gifts of goods and cattle.

Whenever an anxious thought disturbed his heart, he would think about all the things he possessed, about the royal favor, and about all that he could still expect. There came a time when the queen mother, influenced by rivals and envious men, began to persecute him. No matter how much our man defended himself, calling upon the guarantee he had offered by drinking the test poison and expressing in a most touching fashion the feelings of loyalty which he nurtured toward the royal family, the suspicions which rested upon him merely grew. The queen mother, who always held a sword in her hand, soon came to thrusts with it. While our unfortunate man was fulfilling his duties toward the king and /475/ serving him some drink, he felt the point of the sword graze his body many times. "Traitor, poisoner, son of a dog" (umwana w'imbga), such were the epithets that greeted his appearance. The prince at first seemed to defend him. He even told him privately that he did not believe the calumnies circulated against him, that everything would be all right, that his enemies would be exposed, and that the queen mother would eventually trust him once more.

The days went by, the animosity of the mother did not decrease, and now the king intervened only for the sake of appearances.

One evening, at nightfall, the unfortunate occupant of the "hut that devours" felt himself seized by strong arms.

Alone and taken by surprise, he did not put up any resistance. He was led to another hut.

He was laid upon the ground, firmly bound, and his hands tied behind his back. He vainly appealed to the mercy of his jailers, swearing his innocence.

They retorted that they were merely carrying out royal orders, and that their own life was at stake.

This the prisoner could well understand. Soon he was left to himself and to his own thoughts. Constrained tightly by his bonds, unable to move, and troubled about the fate that awaited him, the

644 661 696 unfortunate man grieved. He was prey to the most bitter thoughts when three lugubrious shadows surged forward into his prison from the midst of darkness and came toward him. . . . It must have been about eight o'clock. Two sticks grazed his neck as though to grip him in a vice. He was going to be strangled. In a convulsion of despair, the man who was about to die managed to break the bonds which held his hands and arms. In a flash he grasped both sticks by one end and set up fierce resistance against the efforts of those who wished to kill him, while emitting heart-rending cries, shouting for help, and proclaiming his innocence to the surrounding echoes. The huge agglomeration of /476/ royal huts resounded with the screams of this man who held on to life desperately. . . . No one could fail to know what was going on.

People were familiar with those shrill, heart-rending wails, which had pierced the air more than once. Everyone's heart tightened with emotion, but each person, in fear of the master or the envious men, maintained an impassive or scoffing expression as befits those who live in uncertainty about the future.

The victim struggled violently against his opponents, who could not manage to relax his hold. While two of the executioners attempted to free the sticks by beating him on the head and chest and kicking him, the third one rolled the victim, who was lying on the ground, in the opposite direction. The executioners, who were doing this work for the first time and had never yet killed anyone and who realized the odiousness of their task, trembled all over before the despair of the unfortunate man who had been surrendered to them.

The fight for life was reaching its climax, but it was obvious that victory would eventually rest with the group of opponents, who were able to move freely. Chance, or rather Divine Providence, willed it that a European who was passing through the capital should be with the king at that very moment.

Hearing the desperate cries that arose within the royal enclosure, the white man was moved and spoke heatedly to the prince. . . . The latter, feigning surprise and astonishment, hastened to the courtyard whence the cries rose, checked the stranglers, and returned forthwith to reassure his interlocutor.

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The man who was about to depart this life, exhausted by his efforts, had almost lost consciousness when he heard himself called by a voice which pretended to be compassionate. It was the king himself, feigning pity. He gave his ex-favorite some beer to drink, had him set on his feet, and asked him to follow, promising /477/ to release him. He had never believed in his guilt, he added, and therefore would soon restore his freedom. His goods would be returned to him, and he would resume his functions at court.

It was only a matter of a couple of hours. The poor captive, staggering at each step under the grip of emotion and weakness, was led to a sort of brick building used as a prison. The door was closed upon him.

He found there a fellow captive who sympathized with his misfortune. More fortunate than he, the other man received food and pombe from the outside, which he shared forthwith. The prisoner, who felt that his last hour had come, regained some courage and the strength needed to undertake a new fight for life.

The honeyed words of the king had not fooled him. He knew that the matter had merely been postponed and that soon he would be fetched again. His companion, who was familiar with the mores of the capital, made no attempt to contradict him. Fearing nothing for himself because he was a noble and too well known to be dispatched secretly, he was full of pity for the man who was about to die. Certain of his fellow-prisoner's trustworthiness and encouraged by his advice, the unfortunate servant tried to shake the door open and weighed upon it with all his might. Nothing could be achieved there, however, for it was shut tight. His efforts were in vain. The planks were nailed solidly and resisted his blows and the pressure of his knees. Time was short, however, for the executioners could arrive at any moment.

The prisoner, in whom the desire to live was stronger than the death which threatened him, managed to climb the dry-brick wall by using his feet and hands. The building was several years old, and the soil which had been used as mortar had disintegrated in the course of time, offering occasional holds to fingers and nails actuated /478/ by an iron will. The head of the climber reached the thatch roof.

644 The man quickly broke through the wood and bamboo of the framework.
661 He was just in time. The door of the prison opened at the same
696 moment, and the executioners came in to seize the condemned man. The latter took off and hurled himself into space. The wall was fortunately of moderate height. The fugitive nevertheless sprained himself slightly in falling upon his feet. Not having had time for thought, he had merely obeyed the instinct for self-preservation. The imminence of danger lent him wings, for his leap had drawn the attention of those who vainly sought him inside.

The alarm was sounded, and the fugitive pursued. He did not lose his head, however. Instead of risking capture, which was bound to result if he placed all his trust in flight, our man, who had some headway over his pursuers, hid in the capital itself at the home of a friend he trusted completely. It was to be expected that searches would be made in the huts. In order to avert this new danger, one of the long baskets used to store beans inside the huts was readied to provide the fugitive with a foolproof hiding place.

For further safety his head was covered with beans which allowed him to breathe sideways but which were sure to defeat the searchers' quest. All inspections and investigations among the inhabitants were in vain. When vigilance had relaxed a little, the lucky fugitive took advantage one evening of the shades of night to leave forever that tragic place which had nearly become his grave. His flight was discovered some time later. Under directives from higher sources, the local chief had the hut surrounded. Its owner managed to escape in time.

The affair had become known, and furthermore the country had come increasingly under the sway of European administration. The latter /479/ heard of the matter. A trial took place which did not turn out in favor of the persecutors.

As a result, the fugitive was not disturbed again.

Many years have passed since this moving episode. The memory of those frightful events has nevertheless remained painful to the hero of the tragedy, who does not like to recall the past. The stubborn scars which cross his face, chest, and arms corroborate the seriousness of the episode that nearly killed him. He has met

644 since more than once with his neophyte executioners, who did not
661 fail to congratulate him with some embarrassment while apologizing
696 for the odious task which had been entrusted to them. "Some luck thou had!" they already told him (wagiz' Imana). "What an ugly business the king had entrusted to us!"

"Good for thee, if you managed to get out of such a tight corner." A little later he was even presented to the king, who was first taken aback. He recovered himself quickly and congratulated him in turn. "It was God who saved you (N'Imana yagukijije)," he added. In gratitude to God, Who had rescued him from such a diffi-
[553] cult situation, the lucky fugitive changed his name from Ngirimandwa ("The spirits of the initiates are on my side") to Ngirimana, which means "I have God (on my side)."

After a whole string of circumstances, all equally eventful and dramatic, the outcome had finally turned out in Ngirimandwa's favor.

For one fugitive who was able to narrate in detail the vicissitudes of the drama that nearly killed him, however, how many unfortunate ones vanished into the fatal den without a trace!

Now that the times have changed, elders whose lips were formerly sealed by the rule of secrecy and by the fear of corporal punishment, freely mention the names of unfortunate executed men they knew. They recall among many others a young man who had been a page. /480/ His intelligence, ability, and liveliness had drawn the notice of the sovereign to him, who made him his favorite and could not do without him. As in the previous case the years went by and the prince's favor was transferred elsewhere.

[539] "A king's friendship, a day's friendship," says the proverb.

He had been practically forsaken and was hardly noticed anymore, when one day he was requested to work in the famous "bloody hut."

What had he done that his fate should be so irreparably settled? That is practically unknown.

About eight days after he had received his new job, he was summoned in great haste as though for some pressing errand. It was

644 the queen mother who had called him. She wanted news of a court
661 lady who had just given birth.
696 This woman lived a short distance from the capital. Night fell. The messenger set out on his way. He was accompanied by a chief and by a factotum.

They reached the edge of a swamp of sinister fame where summary executions were formerly performed.

The young man, guiltless and carefree, walked in front. He was struck from behind... and has never been heard of since.

Another occupant of the hut with the portentous name, just as peaceable as the preceding one but older, was brutally seized in turn when he least expected it, after being designated by the diviners' bones.... First he managed to run away and hide at a friend's house. When he attempted to return to his own village, however, he was recognized and captured along the way by a chief who led him back to the capital. He was tossed into prison where he was joined during the night by sinister-looking men. They held in their hands large milk jars which they used to crush his jaw and face. The prisoner, tightly bound as the Blacks know how to do, was stretched upon the ground /481/ and unable to make the least motion. Kicks and blows fell thick and fast upon the chest and stomach of the unfortunate man whose body soon became a single wound.

He was finished off by strangulation.

Several groups of young girls were also killed, some under the fallacious pretext of having poisoned the tobacco they prepared, others for having stolen bead necklaces. The latter, after they had confessed, were first thrown into prison. A day or two later, they were taken out and led to the queen mother, who feigned reconciliation and pardon and received them with great displays of joy. Hydromel was served to them in large quantities. A deep sleep took hold of them. Then the executioner came and strangled them....

681 In order to give an idea of the frequency of executions and
696 variety of corporal punishments, we shall give here a sort of
644 necrological list that includes the names of the victims and the circumstances of their death.

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Sentashonga, the victim's cousin, was granted permission that evening to have the corpse of his relative buried.

The elders and former habitués of the court do not lack for narratives of this kind, which they relate like any other tale without seeming overly shocked by them. Such is the environment, such are the mores and attitudes. /485/

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"The king is the master," they say. "He does as he pleases. The decisions he makes cannot be contested. He is the supreme judge. One can only obey and assent." The victims' relatives were sometimes the first to come and greet him, feigning total impassiveness, forced as they were to drive back to the bottom of their hearts the bitter pain which they could not but feel.

Complaints, wails, and recriminations could only have stirred up the anger of the king and given rise to new slaughters.

While looking after his own safety, every person also had to keep in mind that of his people /relatives and friends/. The latter, indeed, might be held responsible for the deeds and actions, no matter how harmless, of any of their fellow members. The extermination of a whole family formerly weighed very little on the scale of royal justice.

So as not to provoke trouble which might prove fatal, therefore, they put a good face on misfortune. Those executed, however innocent they might have been, were claimed in loud voices to have been cursed men (ibichibga) or rebels. To shed tears or express one's sorrow were crimes of high treason. "A mere whim of the master was sufficient to send a person to punishment. What won't one do to avoid so cruel a fate?" This statement made by a court favorite of the previous reign /avant-règne/ reveals a great deal about the mores of the time. "If the king happened to sprain his foot," added the same man, "to knock against some obstacle or pebble, it was not a good idea to meet with him at that moment."

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In his anger the monarch might accuse anyone of having bewitched him, and wreak then and there a signal vengeance.

Professional executioners were not always used for this purpose. The king might call upon any member of his retinue to carry out the task. The person had to comply, no matter how revolted he might

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643 be /486/ by this dreadful assignment. Hands unpracticed in dealing
661 death might sometimes fumble, but the master was watching and
696 the task had to be carried through. The fact of being a friend of the victim did not exempt anyone from this odious task.

As a rule and with some rare exceptions, it may be said that the subjects were not inordinately appalled by such assignments, so much was this an accepted custom of the times.

186 This did not prevent the Banyarwanda from regarding themselves as superior to other Blacks, whom they thought to surpass in intelligence and civilization. Despite the stains and stigmas of the past, they reject with irritation the term Shenzi, which is applied exclusively to noncivilized groups, as not applying in any way to them or to their ancestors. It is good to close the tale of these cruel practices and to feel that the curtain of time has been drawn forever over the past.

III. Poisoning and Bewitching: The Use of Charms and Philters

754 What should we really believe about those victims whose death is attributed to bewitchment or poisoning? The Blacks unquestionably mention this constantly. Their credulity in this connection is universal and extraordinary.

Numerous examples are cited of deaths which are said to have resulted from one or the other of those alleged causes.

We may add that the natives are familiar with numerous methods for bewitching their enemies, and that sorcerers in this evil category, both male and female, are found in great numbers throughout the country. One thing is certain: their superlative reputation is worse than their deeds.

As for crimes of poisoning, one may rest assured that such attempts were made and that toxic materials were used to this end, some of which were extracted locally and others purchased in neighboring regions such as /487/ the Uswi and Bunyabungu. How effective were those poisons? This is not easy to determine since, on the one hand, a true case of poisoning has never actually been witnessed, although the Blacks are absolutely convinced that they do occur

644 Appointed cowherds lead before them a small herd of milk
484 cows to provide for the needs of the king.

661 The passage of a prince was formerly tantamount to a disaster for the local inhabitants, who had to harbor the members of the train.

The retinue did not merely include courtiers, the royal guard, sorcerers, and the usual employees. Those dignitaries who wished to retain the good graces of the sovereign made it their business to accompany him with their numerous servants. Idlers and jacks-of-all-trades also joined the train along the way and fleeced the unlucky natives on whom they paid a visit.

This was indeed a veritable army which spared neither friend nor foe, trampling the crops in their path, looting travelers, and taking by force from the local inhabitants whatever had not been hidden in time.

[551] The men who made up the usual retinue of Kigeri IV Lwabugiri were nicknamed the "Pillagers" (1), owing to their extortions.

1. Their native nickname, Ibitsimbanyi, is a noun derived from the verb gutsimba, which means "to pillage," "to fleece."

644 11. For the sake of completeness, we shall cite the following
768 two customs which the keepers of the traditions assure us were observed in the past. /498/

When the death of a neighboring sovereign, of the Uswi, Urundi, or Karagwe, was announced, the king had to leave his residence and have a new one built (1).

1. Times have changed. The choice of a site and the building of a new "palace" would present too many difficulties today. When the prince of Urundi died, the king merely spent eight days outside his habitual

173 with beans. Ruganzu was pleased with the discovery and congratulated the cook. He was shown a few of the plants, and he had some of their seeds gathered.

Others add that the woman in question presented him on the same occasion with the first sorghum bread he had ever seen, hence the thought of introducing the cultivation of that grain plant into his kingdom.

796 Whatever the authenticity of these details may be, the truth is that the "first fruits" festival (umuganura, kuganuz' umwami) is celebrated every year at the capital to commemorate the introduction of sorghum, eleusine, and the spinach-like plant into Ruanda. It was usually celebrated in February or March for eleusine, and in May for sorghum; to each occasion the famous plant was added. Over the last few years, eleusine, sorghum, and spinach have been brought at one time to the capital for a single ceremony. In the Bumbogo a special family is in charge of cultivating the field where the grain destined for the court is harvested.

This function is transmitted from father to son. At sowing time the appointed keeper of the field goes and asks the king for the hoe that will be used to break the ground.

When this envoy appeared at court, the king was supposed to have him struck three times, according to custom.

The reason for this curious practice is unknown.

The man left with his hoe during the night. Once the harvest /501/ was concluded, the same people /sic/ returned to the capital to fetch the special basket (igitenda ch' imikondo) in which the sorghum or eleusine was carried. The basket was placed on a litter (ingobyi). Those who walked in the procession enjoyed the privilege [661] of robbing and looting the people they found along the way.

796 The story tells that they did not hesitate to make use of this 661 privilege in the old days, but that for some time things had improved, and with good reason. The chiefs whose territory they crossed at night were compelled to treat them well because they were the king's men. Needless to add, they were always ready to indulge in revelry when the opportunity arose. Once arrived at the capital they were allowed by custom, it seems, to handle the Batutsi roughly and to

796 throw cow bones into their face. This is no longer the case, and
661 times have changed for the better. An evolution of ideas has taken place under European influence. Since these men are no longer inviolate, their behavior has necessarily become less brutal.

They were immediately received by the king, who asked them
796 into his hut to the exclusion of his usual entourage. The great chief of the Bumbogo (umutware w' intebe), of the Batsobe clan, alone came in with the king. It was he who officially presented the first fruits to the sovereign. Precautions were taken so that no one might come near the grain destined for the king. Carefully selected slaves or servant girls threshed the stalks at night far from all unhallowed glances. Then they had the task of crushing the grain before the eyes of the monarch. They worked with the most meticulous cleanliness, that is to say, without spitting into their hands or touching the flour with their unhallowed fingers.

Princes and dignitaries live in perpetual fear of poisoning and spells, hence the numerous measures /502/ and strict watchfulness observed in these circumstances. When enough flour had been obtained to make bread (umutsima), another slave girl took it and immediately prepared it.

The dough was ceremoniously taken to the king, who removed a piece from it with his fingers. He brought it first to his forehead, then to his chest, and then took it to his mouth. The chief who was present did the same. This ceremony was carried out in silence. The men who had brought the first fruits also offered the monarch some stalks of issogi, which is, as we have seen, one of the most important plants (imbuto nkuru).

[262] It must be remembered that the Banyarwanda cannot eat sorghum bread or eleusine bread alone because it is too dry.

They usually eat it, therefore, with a mouthful of beans cooked along with this sort of spinach. The latter lends the beans a flavor which is highly esteemed by the natives. This is what gave the plant a choice place among other foods.

796 It was customary for the men who had taken part in the pro-
264 cession to be rewarded. A bucket (umuvule) was filled with milk, and another with beans that were only half cooked.

234 302 Butter is not eaten. It is used to anoint the body and to smear on clothes. Large gourds (kisabo) are used for making butter; they are held at the neck with one hand and rocked back and forth on the ground. Butter is stored in small clay [143] and 415 wooden vessels (akachendo). The latter often have looped handles and are then called uchende yo mukondo.

233 The local form of intensive agriculture on very fertile soil is not easy to combine with the extremely extensive cattle raising. Barn feeding is unknown. The animals graze all day in the open and are locked into the kraal (lugo) at night. Thus, even in the densely populated and highly agricultural regions, it is very difficult to keep even the milch cows near the settlements. The rest of the animals are driven out to more remote pastures. For example, the Bagoye drive their cows eastward into the primeval 233 forest on the watershed. The animals are cared for by special 465 Batutsi caretakers who are paid to do this. For his service the herdsman gets the milk the first two months, since the cow is not returned to the owner until her calf is two months old. The herdsman also gets a jug of beer worth one hoe. He is, however, held accountable for the cow and must replace animals which are killed or stolen.

246 Pastures receive no special attention. On the northern slope of Mount Ndisa, however, I saw an irrigation system that watered the mountain meadows. Otherwise the steppes are merely burned off at the end of the dry season; this removes the withered grass and the young grass comes up abundantly after the first rain, the ground having been fertilized by the ashes. Needless to say, grass fires have greatly contributed to the deforestation of Ruanda, especially in the less populated areas. Granted that the forests have been destroyed by the farmers, nevertheless it is the herdsmen who make a second growth impossible. Grass fires rage throughout the country. In Mulera and Bugoye where everything is under cultivation, one sees fires only on the volcanic plains.

233 Since no fodder is stored, the cattle become very thin during ● 661 the dry season. It is not uncommon for Batutsi chiefs to have their herds driven into the sweet potato plantations of their farmers, where great damage is done. No matter how great their loss, the Bahutu cannot drive the cows out nor resist in any way.

643 of the king who are recognized and fully qualified. The moment a
644 king has a son whom he recognizes, the queen mother is said to be sent away. For this reason she brings all her influence to bear (and this influence is, as a rule, very great) to prevent the king, as long as possible, from recognizing any of his children as fully qualified.

643 Bagaragu. The king is the owner of all the land and all the
423 cows in the country. He exercises his power by granting these lands and recalling them when he is displeased. In this manner the king appoints his officials who as such can be regarded as temporary large landowners. The king keeps them in office and on their land, but he can drive them out or increase their holdings at any time.

643 The king is omnipotent. The only thing that does not yield to him is the physically impossible. Thus, for example, he can find no one who is inclined to settle as chief in Ndorwa, for this would be too dangerous in spite of the eventual help of the king.

●661 An individual's power and possessions depend chiefly on the
643 favor of the king. This is the case to such an extent that even
558 the privileged must always remain in contact with the king or even live at his court, otherwise they cannot hold on to their success or their possessions. No matter how wealthy a man is, he can lose everything if he has no allies and if someone more fortunate succeeds in getting the king to withdraw his favor.

643 Every fortune hunter is surrounded by a number of clients who
644 dog his footsteps in the hope of participating in the successes of their patron. One can judge the importance and the prospects of the master by the number of these second-class fortune hunters who often have to content themselves with nothing more than gifts of milk from the king.

644 When I lived in Nyanza, I had an opportunity at eleven o'clock every morning to see the mighty ones, with a following of 50 to 60 men, march up to the king to give him a morning greeting. Among these were also completely impoverished [257] devils who, although they were marching up to the king as his bagaragu, had only one Muhutu in their retinue.

The most intimate associates of the king are his high chiefs. They are his clients (bagaragu). At the time of my visit in Nyanza

644 the following high chiefs were mentioned:

1. Nshohozamigo (Luhanga is his mugaragu in Mulera);
2. Kanuma from Kissaka;
3. Niamutezi from Kissaka;
4. Lutangabo from Kissaka;
5. Rwamanwa from Niaruguru;
6. Rudegambia;
7. Kabare from Bugessera, Nduga, Kifumbiro, Bugansa, Kissaka, etc.;
8. Lukara lwa Bishingwe (Muhutu) from Mulera;
9. Ndazihiwe (Muhutu);
10. Ishirangabo;
11. Runiga (Muhutu of the Bahenyi clan);
12. Bushakwe (Lwakadygi is his mugaragu in Bugoye);
13. Niamuhanga from Bgisha;
14. Lwabilinda from Mukinjaga, brother of Lwabugiri Kigeri;
15. Ruenankiko from Bulembo south of Mount Ndisa;
16. Nigensi from Mukinjaga.

644 These clients live in the huts that surround the large kraal of
361 the king. Their "villas" (bilaro) looked to me like an encampment that had been set up a few days before, probably because they may not have trees planted around them, as is customary, because this might detract from the beauty of the trees surrounding the royal kraal. The only ornamentations in the entire vicinity were the trees of an old abandoned settlement on a neighboring hill.

644 The bagaragu of the king do not have any definitely appointed periods of service at court, as do the musicians, for example. Their periods of uninterrupted sojourn fluctuate between weeks and years. If you ask a high chief when he expects to go home, you always get the same answer: "When the king permits it." Besides
644 the favored, it is especially the feared who are kept at court for
661 a long time so that, removed from their own people and surrounded by a lot of envious, covetous rivals, they become innocuous. If they are absent too long, they gradually lose all contact with their followers. Time and distance have their effect, here as everywhere. For example, a rebellious chief from Mukinjaga was retained at court for the length of time it would take him to fill a

traveling basket with small white beads. For two years his people had to gather these beads, [258] a ransom which was designed not to increase the delight of the subjects with their master. When he saw that the basket was being filled too quickly, the king decided that the cure for the man's attitude was not sufficiently complete and made him fill a storehouse (kigega) with hoes. Only then did Musinga permit him to go home.

Thus, next to the splitting up of property, the sojourn at court is the most important factor in the organization and stabilization of the Ruanda state. To a certain extent this ensures against all eventualities. As long as the chief, the most important person in his territory, remains at court, the king holds all the chief's lands in his own hands to a certain extent.

The local taxation system is also closely connected with the sojourn of the bagaragu at court. The high chiefs must give the king gifts as large as possible in order not to lose favor. On the other hand, they must not demand too much of their people who might otherwise move away. This restricts them in two directions. It is left to them to strike a balance between these two factors, and the result is that the individual personality of the chief plays a much greater role than is the case in corresponding positions in our modern state.

The Royal Court. The court of the king consists of the representatives of the aristocracy, who make up a large majority of his bagaragu and hold various offices, and all kinds of minor officials who serve the ruler. The feudal lords and their retinues make up the bulk of the population of Nyanza, but they come and then go back again to their holdings when the king gives his permission. Thus, the size of the court fluctuates considerably. During the visit of His Highness the Duke of Mecklenburg there was great excitement at Musinga's court, and the whole courtyard in front of the house was always full of people. Taps were postponed accordingly, and one usually did not hear them until around two o'clock in the morning, sometimes even later.

This, however, was not the usual picture of life at court. Everyone was so worn out by all the festivities that after the departure of His Highness the courtyard was quite empty. When I came to call the day after the expedition had departed, I did not find a single chief paying court to the king.

567 baja who were sold by their parents when they were children in exchange for food during the not infrequent famines. I was unable to find out anything in detail about the social position of boys who are sold in this way. I believe that when they grow up they are absorbed into the bagaragu stratum.

Every district that has periodic famines, for example, Ufumbiro [263], furnishes slaves who, unprotected by their relatives in a strange region, remain in an inferior position, dependent on the protection of their master. In every mission one can see a number of little slaves who have settled there to get away from their masters. On the whole, however, the position of slaves is not at all bad. I never heard of maltreatment.

565 [493] Loads are carried chiefly by the biletwa.[1] The Bahutu of this category have personal freedom. They may abandon their house and fields and change masters, as long as they do not leave the state. The batware on the border must see to it that people do not leave the country.

●661 565 Actually, however, the existence of the common man is of no consequence, and he is tolerated only on the condition that he satisfies all the demands of the rulers. Often a native cannot simply give up his field and his hut without further ado. He must put up with minor depredations, ostensibly as punishment for alleged crimes. He must pay his taxes and provide food for travelers if the king requests it, although the mutware himself pockets the amount given.

In this primitive, undifferentiated society, however, the possibilities of exploitation are extremely limited. As long as it is simply a question of furnishing food for the relatively small number of rulers, the latter can be satisfied, no matter how large their appetites. Thus, the slight possibility of exploitation lays the foundation of a social equilibrium without legally established norms. Also, if we take into consideration the constant internal struggle of an unsettled state which is very much dependent on the support of the subject masses, we discover the second factor which sharply curbs tyranny. The rulers must consider their subjects, otherwise they run the risk of being abandoned by their followers and subjects and defeated by their rival. Political

[1] [i.e. Free farmers without land of their own—Analyst]

661 wisdom consists in not letting oneself be governed too much by
765 caprice and not becoming relatively the worst tyrant.

Even now when there is peace in the land, petty wars among
669 Musinga's bagaragu and brawls among the bagaragu of the bagaragu
642 of the king are by no means rare, but they occur chiefly in the border regions where the power of the king is not so strongly felt. At the time of my visit, for example, Lukara was fighting with Luhanga in Mulera. In cases like this it often happens that the king is unable to find a man who would not be too afraid to manage and tax the warlike farmers if they were assigned to him. In this way the Bahutu gain their independence and can be subjugated anew only by a punitive expedition.

[264] Under these circumstances, petty internal strife is a natural function of the state and does not result merely in brutality and devastation. In this way, even though it is uneconomical, poor administrators are weeded out, and the power of the strong is curtailed. This principle may at first glance seem paradoxical, but it corresponds very well to the facts. When it comes to the formation of a state under unlimited rule which on principle admits no protest, limitations must arise spontaneously if large masses of people are to live together.

661 The situation changes, however, the moment there is pacifi-
642 cation and the country is opened up and organized by Europeans.
178 The old, natural, albeit uneconomical forms which, after all,
648 regulated conditions are now done away with by force of arms and the rulers, weakened by emigration, overcome. On the other hand, the opening up of export trade creates countless possibilities for exploiting subjects in a hitherto unknown way. The situation of the natives is getting worse, for the new judicial norms, despite their humane phraseology, are less protection to them than the old regulations upon which the organization of the state was built. In Kissaka one can see many natives from Ussuwi who have taken refuge there from the blessings of humane European civilization. Under these new conditions, the only weapon in the hands of the subjects is economic injury to the chief, and this can be achieved by the emigration of the labor force.

The situation of the natives is worst of all where Europeans have put a stop to freedom of movement in order to make police

661 642 178 648 control easier. The moment this happens the native no longer has any protection against his chief. As a result, the need for serious intervention by the European administration becomes an urgent necessity. With increased possibilities of exploitation certain norms must now be set up which will protect the interests of the common man and permit him some freedom, in other words, give him back everything that was formerly guaranteed him by means of a less perfect, less compact and oppressive social organization and without any kind of pact. Under these conditions, further intervention by the European administration becomes a necessity, because there is as yet no guarantee that the new order will do more than contribute to a "more complete exploitation of the lazy Negro" and perhaps also to a decline in the population.

642 64 178 By comparing conditions in Ndorwa, Mulera, Bugoye, and Nduga, we can easily determine the direction in which conditions have developed in Ruanda.

In Ndorwa we find independent clans living apart from one another.

[265] In Mulera the clans have been subjugated by the king and pay taxes. The Batutsi have driven the natives from some of the hills and permit homeless members of disrupted clans to settle there. These dregs must support their masters and perform compulsory services for the protection they get. These are the new communities which really should be spoken of as analogous to large estates. Some of the clan elders, such as Bishingwe, father of Lukara, are joining the conquerors and are supported by them. With this support they settle immigrants on the uncultivated land, and the latter must perform compulsory services, just as they do for the Batutsi.

In Bugoye the distinction between conquerors and peasant aristocracy is gradually being effaced and along with it the difference between impoverished clan members and immigrants who are domiciled on the remaining free land by the clan elder and become his bondsmen. In Bugoye this process is not yet completed.

The Bambari clan have already put their buletwa to work in the field of the chief, who is also a Mumbari and who must be regarded as a former clan elder. Here the land is already regarded as his property, as land granted by the king.

651 by their ancestors and from which they were not driven away during the conquest.

The second ancient burden is butaka. It is paid primarily in food and tobacco and only to a minor extent in cash hoe-money. The king's capital does not have any fields of its own. The court is fed by supplies delivered by subjects from near and distant provinces. Only cattle are pastured in the environs of the capital; there are no farmers who till land.

644 651 All the potentates living at court are fed from home. Bringing food for the chief residing at court is called kugemurira mutware. Food supplies are brought almost daily. As a result, any stoppage of this traffic means a food scarcity among the dignitaries thus affected. There are no markets where provisions could be obtained. Because of this primitive arrangement, food in the capital is always rather scarce, and everyone to whom I spoke about this told me that no one lives in the lap of luxury at court during his stay which is usually involuntary. The Batwa bodyguards even maintain that they actually starve and would very much like to return to their poor settlements.

To these two ancient tax burdens Lwabugiri added the war tax (umuheto) and Musinga the food supply tax (ilali) for visiting Europeans.

651 CC1 Among the Bahutu the furnishing of food supplies for visiting Europeans is merely an additional tax for the benefit of their chief. He regards the presents of the European as his property and not infrequently takes for himself part of the supplies brought by his people for the Europeans. I saw an example of this in Kwa Rutagungira. The requisition for my presence brought the chief three goats and four pots of beer, but I received only two pots and two goats. The larger pots and the best goats were put aside by the chief, but this was done too close to my camp to escape the notice of the people who were excited by the approaching pots of beer.

651 635 The collection of butaka and muheto, which are paid, theoretically at least, throughout the country, is distributed among various chiefs, as has already been reported by Von

651 The bagaragu of Chief Makobi do hoeing as recompense for rented fields, or this may be done by paid day laborers (mubizi). The clan communities under discussion, however, are free of this burden, since they live on their own land.

There are also taxes that are paid by particular families or communities. The furnishing of objects whose manufacture presupposes a certain skill falls in this category. Among these objects are salt that is made from swamp grass, grass rings for women's legs (butega), otter skins, wildcat skins, cowhides, barkcloth, weapons, etc. The people who furnish these items are exempt from part of the normal taxes that represent the share of the ordinary farmer. Thus, Mulera furnishes a rather large number of butega.

651 614 The duty of the Bahenyi, a privileged Bahutu clan, is to build royal houses. They also play a part in the cult, offering special sacrifices, and they may not eat with members of other clans.

Special taxation on individual clans seems to be a remnant of an older form of taxation, the clan tax. This has been very nicely preserved in Kiziba where individual clans have special duties toward the king. This is the nature of the taxes borne by free, landowning farmers (ngabo) in Mulera. Here the tax is the concern of the clan community. It is paid by the clan elder, and apportioning the tax is an internal matter for the community. All its members, however, have joint responsibility for paying the tax.

The ngabo pay their taxes in honey and also give the king annually every twentieth cow. If the number of cows owned is less than 20, a goat is given for each cow. In figuring taxes, one cow is equal to 20 goats.

651 661 [274] In Mulera the taxes of the ngabo are collected by special deputies of the king. We need not emphasize the self-evident fact that the officials entrusted with the collection of taxes increase the amount to their advantage and do not shrink from shameful plunder. If, as is generally the case, a high chief is not present when the taxes are collected, the Balera will not stand for this oppression. For their part, they seek every opportunity to get out of paying taxes altogether. That is why there are big rows

651 and not infrequently open battles whenever collection takes place.
661 On the way to Mulera, at Kwa Rutagungira, I saw several wounded Batutsi who had to pay for their zeal as officials with holes in their hides. The business efficiency of the tax collectors is well characterized if we note their habit of substituting some of their poorer stock for the better cows that are delivered as the king's taxes. In view of its chronic character, this misuse and plunder must be regarded as a form of official remuneration.

651 We must emphasize the fact that in Mulera the taxes of the ngabo are linked to the community, the people, and not to the land they cultivate. That is why the outsider who has settled on alien soil with the approval of the residents does not participate in community taxes. He continues to pay the taxes of his own clan, and only if he is adopted by the resident clan does he pay taxes where he has settled.

651 178 This principle of family tax becomes complicated the moment pacification makes possible the disruption of clans which under the most primitive conditions have been held together by blood revenge. I saw the consequences of this complication of social conditions in Mulera in the form of a punitive expedition which reduced to ashes the settlement on Mount Kisseke. A few outsiders had bought with gifts permission to settle on Kisseke from the established residents. A few weeks after they were settled, some Batutsi arrived who had the right to collect taxes from the community of new settlers but who were complete strangers to the old established population. The new settlers [687] promised the old ones a bull, and the latter drove off the Batutsi with weapons, killing a few and wounding several. A punitive expedition of government troops, undertaken because of Musinga's complaint, was the sequel.

651 491 The ferry toll is a special tax that affects traders particularly. It is collected by batware who are stationed at the ferries and whose people run the boats. The toll is very high. For a traveler with his pack, it is ten large beads, that is to say, a third of a day's wages. Twenty men with a herd of goats paid a piece of cloth (nguo).

[275] The batware who collect the ferry toll must also keep watch over the traffic. At the border ferries, for example, on

701 expeditionary force against Bassebia, a subchief of Ngurube, the Mutwa from Ndorwa. As a rule, the general pays with his life [687] for a military failure.

Count Von Götzen (2) mentions that men set out for war

> 2. Götzen, G.A., Count Von, Durch Afrika von Ost nach West [Through Africa from East to West] (Berlin, 1899), p. 166.

accompanied by their wives, but the women do not take part in the fighting.

726, 791 In case of war there must always be a Muhenyi among the troops. He himself is invulnerable, and it is his duty to vilify the enemy and render their weapons harmless. A division accompanied by a Muhenyi [276] must always be victorious. This belief, however, is far too often shattered by the facts. The expedition against Bassebia was defeated, and the Muhenyi who accompanied the column lost his life. This unexpected outcome was explained by the fact that the Mutwa chief, Bassebia, had even greater magicians at his command. The "invulnerable" Bahenyi are still very much feared by everyone and are permitted to commit acts of violence which would not be tolerated for other persons.

727 The trophies brought back to the king from campaigns consist of the heads and genitals of the slain enemies. On the last unsuccessful expedition against the Mutwa chief, Bassebia, no Batwa heads or genitals were captured. In order to cover up [661] their failure and not be ridiculed because they had no trophies, the returning warriors killed a few peaceful farmers who had to sacrifice their heads and genitals to glorify the entrance of the troops into the capital.

In view of the kind of trophies taken, the warriors try to kill their opponents and not take any prisoners. This is probably also tied in with the social organization which does not give rise to a need for slave labor.

175 Mutara Lwogera was also a successful warrior. He conquered
643 Bugoye and in 1876 added Kissaka to Ruanda by force of arms.
Lwabugiri Kigeri who was visited by Count Von Götzen, the first European to do so, was also a very belligerent ruler. He increased Ruanda's possessions in the Rutshuru Basin as far as Lake Edward.

175 In order to characterize the personality of Lwabugiri some-
643 what more exactly, we must mention that one of his chief delights
661 was stealing cows. If the owner of the cattle resisted, he was punished with confiscation for having the boldness to act against the muami [ruler]. If he did not resist, his cows, which he had learned to conceal, were simply taken away from him. These cow thefts with which Lwabugiri consciously promoted the splitting up of feudal possessions, as well as the constant wars, made him very troublesome to the Batutsi.

175 Without doubt the rule of Lwabugiri was a period of great
643 expansion and glory for Ruanda. The state enjoyed such a high reputation that neither the Arabs nor Stanley and Emin Pasha ventured to enter it. Lwabugiri undertook numerous campaigns, among them an unsuccessful one to Nkole (1891?). He wanted to get King Ntare's cows in order to supplement his own herds which had been very much decimated by disease. He waged war three times with Urundi, twice with Idjwi Island, three times against Bunyabungu, and twice with Kissaka. Moreover, he laid waste the country of Mulera three times in order to punish rebellious subjects, and he pillaged the Gana Mukari (1) three times in his

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1. Brard, A., "Skizzen aus Ruanda [Ruanda Sketches]," Afrikabote, 1900-1901, p. 99.

ancestral province because of the revolt which was supposed to have taken place there. He was unsuccessful in his expeditions against Urundi. The two kings, Lwabugiri and Mwezi Kisabo (?), made peace with each other and built their settlements on the border between the two states, on the Akanjaru. The wars with the inhabitants of Idjwi Island were also only temporarily successful.

8: Hall G-5 (1929-31) 1938 FO42 Rundi FO42

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Instances: A man has beaten his wife and driven away her relatives when they came to see him. She leaves him for another man, who is ordered to refund the bride-wealth.

A wife has left her husband and is now pregnant by another man. The husband will be satisfied either with the child or his bride-wealth. The paternity of the second man is established, and bride-wealth is to be paid over.

In several cases a woman's relatives are found to have married her to another man in her husband's absence, or after she has left him and returned home. Here again circumstances determine whether the first or the second union shall be dissolved. In considering these, the voice of the woman is not disregarded, and in one case, after judgement has issued in the original husband's favour, it is amended there and then owing to his wife's refusal to return to him.

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Several marriages are found to be broken up on account of the Chief's seizing cattle paid in bride-wealth.

Instances: A wife goes off to her father's because the Chief has taken the bride-wealth cow.

A man from Urundi pays a cow in bride-wealth, which is seized by the Chief in order to recoup himself after some of his cattle have been stolen by Urundi natives: and the woman's father therefore takes her back.

In a third case, this right or propensity is deliberately made use of by a husband who wishes to shuffle off his wife. He arranges for the Chief to seize the bride-wealth cow with its two calves, and then sends his wife home. But the stratagem fails.

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Finally, the existence of polygyny is to be referred to. That it may lead to disharmony in the home appears from two cases, in the former of which the first wife is so aggravated by her husband taking another spouse that she has assaulted him, while in the other a husband is brought to Court for tying up his second wife on suspicion of her having bewitched the first one, with a threat that he would kill her if the first one died. And a third husband finds himself heavily fined for being influenced by the predilections of his first wife. He had paid bride-wealth for a second: the first wife did not approve of the newcomer: her sister coming soon afterwards with a gift of beer, he kept her instead; she had already been promised in marriage, however, and he has to face an indignant betrothed as well as her father, in Court.

R. DE Z. HALL.

9:Maquet E-5 (1949-1951) 1961 FO42 Rundi FO42

It is still less easy to assess the relative importance of land and cattle taxes. Informants say that in the past they had to give a great deal, but such recollections of taxpayers do not mean very much. It is certain that if such a fiscal system has been maintained for numerous generations, exploitation has been kept within bearable limits. In Ruanda, as elsewhere, if the taxpayer is overburdened with dues and levies to such a point that he has not enough time and food left to go on producing, the source of impositions will dry up. Fifty years ago, after long practice, the Ruanda rulers had been able, it seems, by trial and error, to determine the exact amount of exploitation that the country could support. Yet if the group of taxpayers as such were not overexploited, it is certain that some individuals in the group have been very heavily taxed merely because those who had the power to impose taxes wanted to avenge a particular offence.

The taxpaying group was not restricted to the Hutu stratum since some tributes were due on cattle holdings. Agricultural dues and tribute labour however, were entirely provided by Hutu and as they constituted about ninety per cent. of the population, the total amount of their contribution was considerably higher than that of other groups.

Those who received benefit from this system were, first of all, the king and his spouses. They did not have to come and live in a district residence to have the use of the produce collected in that district. Goods were sent to the court or wherever the king wanted them. Other beneficiaries were the chiefs in charge of the collection: land-, cattle-, and hill-chiefs. About two-thirds of the impositions on agricultural produce was deducted by them. Were they all Tutsi? No, answered the Tutsi interviewed. According to ninety-two per cent. of them a Hutu could be appointed land-chief. But he could not become a cattle-chief, according to ninety-one per cent. This is quite understandable, as the first had to deal with Hutu and the second with Tutsi. But were many Hutu in fact endowed with the profitable responsibilities of the land-chief or the hill-chief? 258 informants (eighty-six per cent.) were able to give the names of Hutu land-chiefs, but they mentioned only thirty-four different names. A Hutu land-chief, Ndarwubatse, was mentioned 180 times, another, Kanyonyomba, 109 times, and another, Segore, ninety-seven times. As our informants were scattered throughout Ruanda it is very probable that the cases of

9:Maquet E-5 (1949-1951)1961 FO42 Rundi FO42

554 622 184 Ndarwubatse, Kanyonyomba, and Segore were exceptional and that, in fact, Hutu were not very numerous among land-chiefs. The share of Hutu in political power was probably symbolic rather than quantitatively great. Hutu could also be hill-chiefs and sixty-nine per cent. of our informants were able to mention a few names. According to ninety-nine per cent. a Twa could be neither land-chief nor cattle-chief, unless he were ennobled. But in that case, he was not socially a Twa any more, but assimilated to a Tutsi. Twa could be hill-chiefs; sixty-five per cent. of our Tutsi informants mentioned the names of such Twa. Neighbourhood heads were frequently Hutu, but the advantages they drew from their office were minimal, if any.

(*b*) *Maintenance of the central rulers in power*

661 One may conclude that the very great majority of the beneficiaries of the fiscal function of the administrative structure were people of the Tutsi group.

661 634 647 622 A second function of the administrative structure was to enable those who enjoyed political power to keep it. The mwami and his wives centralized the means necessary to afford an important court. Moreover, by granting the profitable offices of land-, cattle-, and hill-chiefs, the mwami increased the number of his faithful dependents. For these chiefs of the administrative structure were appointed by the king. To the question 'who appointed the land- and the cattle-chiefs?' ten different answers were given, but if one adds up all the answers which named the mwami as the person or one of the persons who granted these official appointments, a majority of sixty-five is reached. The confusion in the answers seems due to the fact that different principles operated together in the nomination of such a chief. Firstly, one of the sons of the former office holder usually succeeded to his father, and the latter could often indicate his preferences, but this did not mean that the office was hereditary. Merely, it happened fairly frequently that the mwami liked to strengthen a man's loyalty on the understanding that if he was a good chief, the office could remain in his family. Secondly, the appointment could be made by the mwami following presentation of the candidate by an important chief, such as the army-chief. Consequently, it could appear that the latter was the one who gave the appointment. But the third principle remained: the king kept a complete control of these offices in the sense

9: Maquet E-5 (1949-1951) 1961 FO42 Rundi FO42

that no other authority had the final say in such appointments.

The danger of having some chiefs becoming more and more independent of the central government was avoided by the mwami's power to dismiss anybody and also by the curious duality of chiefs in each district. Increasing the control of the central government over its subordinates seems to have been the function of that duality. Tensions arose between these two chiefs who were neighbours and who exerted their prerogatives in the same territory yet were independent of each other. The mwami was always kept well informed by each of these chiefs of the exactions or suspicious activities of the other. Moreover, both chiefs had the same subordinate, the hill-chief. Consequently the mwami could be sure that if by chance the two chiefs were in agreement, it was very likely that if their common subordinate had some difficulty with one of his superiors, he would attempt and often succeed in getting the other on to his side: *duobus litigantibus tertius gaudens*. In addition, as conflicts of power were unavoidable in such a situation, the chief had to resort to the mwami as judge. In that way the links of the dependence of both of them on the mwami were tightened.

In this analysis it is not suggested that the duality of chiefs was conceived and put into being by a certain mwami in order to fulfil what we regard here as its function. It is possible that it happened in that way. But even if nobody ever thought of reinforcing the royal power by this dual organization, it was nevertheless its function in Ruanda society.

(c) *Social cohesion*

I have mentioned that the hill-chief required dues and tributes not from the individual taxpayer but from the lineage head when possible, and the latter demanded it from the family head. This way of reaching the individual through his kin group and family group enhanced the importance of the descent principle of of kin solidarity. Even in Ruanda where the political organization had taken over so many functions from descent groups, the individual as such was not yet recognized in very important matters like the contributions to the maintenance of the rulers. In this interpretation, the kinship and the administrative structures promote the social cohesion of the group as a whole.

To provide the central government with regular revenues, to

9:Maquet E-5 (1949-1951) 1961 FO42 Rundi FO42

The army-chief's protection was not unconditionally granted to any army member. The chief could refuse to give support to one of his subordinates if he had been disobedient or disloyal. It was up to the chief himself to decide if his warrior or herdsman had an objectionable attitude. The fact that the chief was the only judge of the attitude did not, of course, give the subordinate the assurance of a fair treatment; however, the chief could not indulge often in arbitrary refusals of help because a member could always leave the army and join another if allowed to do so by the chief of this other army. Moreover, the principle of recourse to a superior authority against an intermediate authority was operative here also. If discontent was widespread in an army, the chief could be dismissed by the mwami. Consequently the chief had to take into account public opinion to some extent and could not be indifferent to his popularity. It is clear, however, that the means of pressure that a chief did have on his subordinates were more efficient than the ones subordinates had on him. They had thus to assume a submissive attitude and to gain the chief's favour by gifts and proper behaviour.

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The different functions of the military structure of Ruanda were profitable mainly to the rulers: they contributed to the maintenance in power positions of those who were occupying them. Through that structure, the king secured, in addition to what he received from his tax collectors, an important amount of commodities (necessary for the upkeep of a numerous court), more cattle (consequently the possibility to increase the number of people personally bound to him), and a more complete control of all the chiefs under him (by the possibility of a direct recourse of the subordinates to the royal supreme authority). The ruling position of the army-chiefs was also consolidated by their increase of control on cattle.

The preceding analysis has also disclosed how the army was an important instrument of domination for the Tutsi caste. Warriors being recruited only among Tutsi, organized physical force was exclusively theirs. They alone had in their hands the ultimate basis of political power. Moreover, by the serious training of the *intore*, the aristocratic values and virtues so well adapted for domination were inculcated into the new generations.

The army organization was also a factor for maintenance of the

9:Maquet E-5 (1949-1951) 1961 FO42 Rundi FO42

Tutsi control. A Hutu who in exchange for labour or agricultural goods had been able to acquire a few cows had necessarily to ask for the protection of a lord in order that his cows should not be seized upon under some pretence by a socially powerful neighbour. Then he received cows from his lord and they were merged with his own *imbata*. Consequently, if the agreement had to be ended, the lord could take away besides the cows he had granted, those which had previously belonged to the client.

The two political structures benefited most those among the Tutsi who were rulers. The feudal structure, by granting only a precarious possession of cattle to the clients, left in the hands of the Tutsi the ultimate control of cattle, symbol of social prestige and instrument of power. On the other hand, by the same *buhake*, Tutsi were obtaining the advantages of being provided with labour and agricultural produce. From that standpoint, the Ruanda feudal system granted a minority the means to live—and to live better than the bulk of the population—without having to participate in the manual labour of economic production, by the moderate and clever exploitation of the majority.

In order that an aristocratic structure may perpetuate itself without change as long as it is profitable to the superior caste, it is not sufficient to prevent an invasion or even an infiltration of members of inferior groups who, by modifying the proportion between exploiters and exploited, would completely disturb the smooth working of the system. It is also necessary that all those who are by birth members of the upper caste should live according to the standards of their group. It is most unusual for an upper caste to regard the falling off of some of its members without uneasiness and dismay. This is particularly true when the group position of power is rationalized in terms of innate superiority. Some modern governments in Africa, for example, are much concerned about the 'poor whites' because their decadence threatens the myth of the white racial superiority.

The Tutsi had a similar pretence to a natural superiority as has been pointed out already. Consequently, if one of them was unable to support himself in a way becoming to his caste and seemed on the point of slipping down into the group of those who work manually, it was regarded as a shocking situation that should at once be put right. The remedy was to become the client of a richer Tutsi. The cows thus received, allowed him to subsist in

9:Maquet E-5 (1949-1951) 1961 FO42 Rundi FO42

CHAPTER VII

THE PROBLEM OF TUTSI DOMINATION

At the beginning of this century, after an historical development of which we can at the most have only a glimpse, Ruanda society appeared to be composed of two main strata, the Hutu and Tutsi castes. The latter was dominant in social power and used it to exploit economically the former and to retain political power exclusively.

This system of the social domination of a caste and of the political domination of a group within that caste seemed to be successful and stable at the beginning of the twentieth century. How did the Tutsi achieve the difficult task of keeping such a large caste kingdom a working concern? Before considering the social structural factors which were operative one must take into account the frame in which and the background against which the problem of domination had to be solved. By frame and background, is understood here the totality of circumstances which appeared to the Tutsi, and were for them, unalterable. Tutsi had to adapt their pattern of domination to these circumstances as they were in any event beyond their control. These circumstances were very numerous, pertaining to physical environment (ecological), to human biology, and even to the culture of the group. What these very various elements had in common was that, at the time referred to in this study, they set limits to the action and ways of life of the group. Some of these limits were not immutable in themselves but they were so none the less for the Tutsi at the beginning of the twentieth century.

From this vast congeries of natural, biological, and cultural factors, I shall review only a few which appear most significant from the present point of view: that of the conditions of domination.

1. FRAME AND BACKGROUND OF THE DOMINATION SYSTEM

A first relevant background fact was that, apart from the ultimate control of a most valuable resource, namely, cattle (a subject which will be discussed later), the difference between the equipment of Tutsi and Hutu was not very considerable. It is

9:Maquet E-5 (1949-1951) 1961 FO42 Rundi FO42

One may wonder whether this demographic factor appeared to the Tutsi as a purely natural fact completely beyond their control, or whether they tried to maintain that fortunate proportion. We know that they made it difficult for a Hutu to enter their caste, but it does not seem that they favoured a restriction in the number of their group and an increase in the Hutu group. They shared with the Hutu a very high valuation of fertility and appreciated families with numerous offspring. It should not be forgotten that if a decrease in population would have contributed towards giving each member of the Tutsi caste a greater share in the wealth of the group in an imperceptible degree, for the individual, to have many children was a way to obtain also a greater share of wealth in a very perceptible manner. I suspect that the latter consideration was much clearer than the former for any Tutsi. It is also questionable if the bringing about of the first situation would have been psychologically compatible with the attitude of self-assertion of a domineering caste of warriors. At all events the demographic situation of Ruanda has been a factor favouring, even making possible, the economic exploitation of a majority by a minority.

A third factor which made the second so crucial was the type of economy of the country. Because of the relatively poor soil, the irregularity of the rains, and the methods of cultivation, there was not a very considerable surplus. Having to subsist on a very limited national income, the rulers had to cope with an economic problem in the fundamental meaning of the term—that is, they had to organize a way of life with means insufficient to meet needs. This emphasized the capital importance of compulsory labour and tributes, of regular and efficient collection, and of an apportionment of levies which did not let any prospective taxpayer escape.

A limited character of national resources is certainly a circumstance adverse to the centralization of a government. Indeed, a very centralized government needs a complex machinery: agencies, army, messengers, civil servants, local delegates, &c. Such an organization had been built up in Ruanda in spite of the small economic surplus.

A biological element also has been significant in the establishment and maintenance of Tutsi power in Ruanda. This was the difference in physical appearance between Tutsi and Hutu. Whatever may be the objectivity of physical caste characteristics,

9:Maquet E-5 (1949-1951)1961 FO42 Rundi FO42

dependency upon him? As in many cultures in which a king is a paternal and divine image, the Ruanda monarch certainly contributed towards the creation in Ruanda individuals of a feeling of belonging to a unit which presented some similarities to a family. This was, it seems, how the Ruanda political and feudal structures, by their complexity, succeeded in keeping an equilibrium between, on one hand, the tendencies towards social disintegration that a caste system necessarily produces and, on the other, the minimal cohesion necessary to the maintenance of a social unit such as a nation.

(b) Exploitation and protection of Hutu

The Tutsi were confronted with the dilemma that all conquerors must solve when they settle on a new territory with the intention of staying permanently: are they going to draw upon the natural resources of the country themselves, using their own labour and equipment, and to remove from the area the aboriginal inhabitants by pushing them further on and even by exterminating them as a people, or are they to let them stay and use them by having them working for their benefit? Europeans who settled in North America adopted the first solution, they did not attempt to use Indian labour and they expelled the native population from their hunting areas and began to cultivate their country. The second method has been chosen in most parts of Africa south of the Sahara where Europeans have settled.

Whether Tutsi have explicitly considered this problem is immaterial here. In fact they have adopted the solution which was most advantageous to them. Being pastoralists and not numerous (in comparison with the Hutu peasants), they had no interest in expelling them. If this had been done, they would have had either to till the land themselves or to dispense with beer, peas, sorghum, &c. It was preferable for Tutsi to adopt what Oppenheimer calls the bee-keeper's policy (as opposed to the bear's policy who for the purpose of robbing the beehive, destroys it),[4] that is to say, to keep in the country peasants in order permanently to exploit their productive work. Those who control territory are not a dominant group; it is upon men that power is exerted.

We have seen how, through the political and feudal structures, the country's surplus resources were drained and concentrated in

[4] Oppenheimer, 1902, pp. 65 ff.

9:Maquet E-5 (1949-1951) 1961 FO42 Rundi FO42

Tutsi hands. From that point of view, we have to distinguish here two categories. In the first, we put the mwami, the court, the intermediary military and administrative chiefs, whom we call the rulers; in the second, the ordinary Tutsi. The rulers received tributes and labour through the military and administrative channels; the second got fewer consumption goods directly, but mainly labour by the *buhake*. Thus the satisfaction of the needs of the superior caste was not obtained by economic means but by social pressure.

Were these services in labour and in kind heavy for the Hutu caste? It seems that it was not a too painful obligation for about nine-tenths of the population to secure the whole of the agricultural produce of the country. But we should not forget that it was an economy based on rudimentary techniques and which did not yield a considerable surplus. Moreover, the standard of life of the dominant group was much higher than that of the inferior castes; one may thus safely assume that Tutsi consumed much more than a tenth of the total production. Such an assessment is not very precise but it does not seem possible to obtain a more accurate one.

What is certain is that the social power enjoyed collectively by the Tutsi caste was so great that it must have been a permanent temptation for them to increase their demands on the Hutu group. Such a situation was indeed at the same time both advantageous and dangerous as it carried in itself the seeds of its own destruction. For if the measures of the impositions were exceeded (and the technological and environmental circumstances made the margin very narrow), the subordinate group would be weakened and its productivity would diminish. Eventually, it might be led to leave the territory. To prevent such detrimental occurrences was all the more difficult as each Tutsi was endowed with so much individual social power that he might be inclined to misuse it.

How did the Tutsi deal with this threat? Firstly, by a universal distribution of the levies obtained through the military and administrative structures. Every familial unit of production was obliged to contribute—certainly not equally, but the mere fact of having universal impositions tended to prevent very considerable differences, because a sufficient return was secured and rules were established. These rules were not as fixed and publicized as the fiscal laws in a Western society, yet the mere fact of their existence

9:Maquet E-5 (1949-1951)1961 FO42 Rundi FO42

made for certain guarantees. For the *buhake* services, what each client had to give or do was less clearly determined and depended more on the *shebuja*'s wishes. There were also in that sphere, however, some traditionally admitted limits.

Universality and regulation of dues as such do not prevent the exactions committed by socially powerful individuals and those who required payment of taxes were powerful. Another more efficient obstacle to an exaggerated exploitation was the fact that the political and clientage structures gave to any individual of ability the opportunity to secure for himself a defender and a protector. This opportunity resulted from the plural character of the Ruanda hierarchy.

When one belongs to a single structure, there is only one immediate superior. Consequently, everything must be obtained from him and is owed to him. In a plural system, there are several immediate superiors of approximately equal rank and who are not interdependent. Consequently, it is possible to have the support of one chief (or his complicity even) when resisting another.

This is what happened in Ruanda. An example will show how the plurality of chiefs could be used. Suppose a Hutu had inherited cattle granted by a lord to his grandfather who had also received cows from his army-chief, and who had acquired other cattle by exchange of goods (*imbata*), and because his present lord was too exacting, our Hutu wanted to change and become the client of another important man. He knew that his lord would try to seize all his *imbata* and to choose the best cows among his other cattle. By some gifts, he obtained the support of his army-chief. Before entering into discussion with his lord, he and his army-chief had agreed that all the best cows he had at his disposal and all his *imbata* would be said to have been received from the military chief. They were removed and put on grazing grounds directly protected by the army-chief. Then when the lord claimed more cows than his client wanted to return to him, he had to settle the matter not with a man of very limited power but with the army-chief.

Of course this required clever handling of the situation, but when it succeeded it secured efficient protection against extortion.

It should be added that the recourse of a subject to a higher authority within the same hierarchy was approved and even encouraged in Ruanda. This was another means of putting a check on the exorbitant demands of immediate superiors. This, however,

9:Maquet E-5 (1949-1951) 1961 FO42 Rundi FO42

did not play an important part in the feudal system because there were no socially recognized ties between a client and his lord's lord. Feudality was not a ranking system in the same sense as were the political structures. Each lord had his personal following; he was not as such the representative of a higher authority.

To sum up, the political and clientage structures at the same time secured the economic exploitation of the Hutu and protected them against an exaggerated pressure which could have led to disaster for the upper caste.

(c) *Delegation and centralization of political power*

Before the European occupation the kingdom's population was already numerous, probably around 1,700,000 inhabitants. The orographic configuration of the country made communications rather difficult. In that non-literate culture, an efficient collection of tributes required almost a face to face acquaintance between the subject and his ruler. These circumstances necessitated a delegation of authority to many intermediary chiefs who would be the local representatives of the rulers.

But such an unavoidable system was very dangerous for the central government. Its subordinated agents having frequently authority over a rather numerous population which could provide them with abundant supplies (if nothing was sent to the court) could be tempted to isolate themselves completely from the capital and become independent. Such a course of action would have been facilitated by the military structure and the feudal system.

Some important chiefs were, indeed, authorized to raise an army. Moreover, any military chief whose army was encamped near the border, in a district far from the capital, could gain such ascendancy over his warriors as to win over their allegiance to himself.

The *buhake* was perhaps still more dangerous because, as in any feudal system, it created personal bonds of allegiance between the client and his lord. As such, that bond of loyalty did not extend beyond the lord. One had to obey one's lord because he was one's lord and not because he was a mwami's representative. This is why any feudal system has always been so dangerous for a central government. Independence and revolt against the king have been recurring events in the areas where a feudal system existed.

Ruanda rulers were able to check successfully these tendencies

9:Maquet E-5 (1949-1951)1961 FO42 Rundi FO42

642 178 At the beginning of this century, Ruanda political organization was an instrument of social immobility. It was not a force of expansion meant to increase the Tutsi dominion over the country, but a machinery which succeeded in maintaining a difficult equilibrium between the antinomic tendencies I have reviewed. Any institution in which divergent tendencies meet and are kept balanced bears in itself the principle of its own disintegration. But in Ruanda the equilibrium problem had been so efficiently solved that it seems that an optimum point had been reached. The political organization that sustained the domination system could have been perpetuated as long as forces external and internal to the system itself remained constant. The external influence which modified the political organization has been the contact with the [648] Europeans, another conquest group entering Ruanda history around 1900. But apart from such a consequential event, internal phenomena such as a modification in the demographic ratio, the introduction of new agricultural techniques, the impoverishment of the soil, &c., could have been sufficient to destroy the equilibrium maintained by the Tutsi political organization.

642 178 564 661 What was 'immobilized' by the political organization was the Tutsi's caste's and rulers' almost exclusive control of power. They used it for exploitation, by which is meant here the satisfaction of needs not by economic production but by pressure. I follow here closely Oppenheimer's distinction between economic and political means. Both have the same end, he writes, the satisfaction of needs. But when this end is obtained by one's labour and the equivalent exchange of one's own labour for the labour of others, one may speak of 'economic means' while the unrequited appropriation of the labour of others is 'political means'.[8] This should, however, be qualified in the *buhake* where the client received the usufruct of cattle.

642 564 571 It would, of course, be completely misleading to assume that Ruanda political organization had for its only function the preservation of Tutsi exploitation. Through the political structure, as has been shown, the inferior castes enjoyed security. Collectively, peasants were protected against raiding expeditions of neighbours and against an unlimited and too arbitrary exploitation. Individually, in the difficult or dangerous events of life, a Hutu could rely upon the protection of his lord, of his army-chief, and

[8] Oppenheimer, 1922, p. 25.

9: Maquet E-5 (1949-1951) 1961 FO42 Rundi FO42

of his administrative chiefs if he could not or did not wish to ask his lineage's aid.

Should one, then, speak of a counterpart and interpret the Tutsi privileges as a retribution for the care of the commonweal and public order? No, political organization in Ruanda fulfilled different functions. It cannot be said that one function is the counterpart of the other merely because it benefited different groups. It just so happened that two different functions were fulfilled by the same set of institutions.

To sum up, this political system was a means of maintaining a certain social order in which the group of rulers and their caste appropriated to their consumption a considerable part of the country's goods without having to use their labour in the productive processes.